

An Attack on Education

How South Carolina independent schools ensure campus safety and security in the face of potential violence

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Project Overview

This project was an investigation into safety and security measures implemented by Heads of School within the South Carolina Independent School Association (SCISA). Interviews and an open-ended survey were conducted with both current and former Heads of School. The goal of the project was to determine a) how schools are currently addressing violence prevention; b) how Heads of School perceive safety and security issues; and c) how various factors serve to either facilitate or inhibit implementation of new safety and security initiatives. This report utilizes research conducted on school safety and violence prevention as well as relevant scholarly work on new program implementation. The qualitative data collected was evaluated using the Four Frame Model as developed by Bolman and Deal. This report indicates that SCISA schools are actively implementing new measures to prevent violence on their campus, but face significant challenges in the form of financial limitations and facility design. Heads of School consistently expressed that the topic of safety and security is one of their top priorities, if not the greatest single concern from their leadership perspective. The report suggests that successful implementation of preventative violence initiatives can be influenced by employee buy-in, appropriate training, and extensive communication with key stakeholders. Recommendations to SCISA include a clear vision and commitment from leadership, member schools developing a positive relationship with local law enforcement, consistent and dynamic training sessions with faculty and staff, and requiring a comprehensive safety and security audit as part of the accreditation process.

About the Author

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Executive Summary

While all schools are targets for potential violence, most of the research conducted on safety and security measures has been focused on public institutions. Concerned with the level of school violence being witnessed around the country, the South Carolina Independent School Association (SCISA) formed a Safety and Security Committee to address violence prevention initiatives among its member schools. With 126 member schools and serving nearly 30,000 students, SCISA aims to identify common traits for effective safety and security measures across its association. In an effort to develop strategic goals for the safety and security committee, SCISA partnered with a Vanderbilt University/Peabody College doctoral student to address the following project questions:

1. To what extent are schools implementing safety and security measures?
2. How do Heads of School perceive safety and security issues for their communities?
3. What are the facilitating conditions and barriers to implementation of new safety and security initiatives?

This report addresses the project questions by focusing qualitatively on the perceptions and insight from current and former SCISA Heads of School. An open-response survey with 12 participants was conducted in addition to 15 individual interviews. The findings in this report are intended to guide the SCISA safety and security committee as they establish standards for member schools and ultimately set requirements for accreditation.

Key Findings

1. To what extent are schools implementing safety and security measures?

Training: SCISA schools are incorporating professional development for their faculty and staff, as well as intruder/lockdown drills for their students. The majority of Heads interviewed took the opportunity to utilize in-service work days prior to the start of the school year for 1) review of their crisis management plans and 2) specifically cover the topic of active shooter response. Member schools are typically conducting at least 2 campus lockdown drills over the course of the school year. Between the training and the drills, school leadership dictates the level of sensitive or explicit information shared as well as the degree of student involvement.

Technology: Heads emphasize the importance of managing access to campus facilities and buildings. Citing an increased awareness in school shootings, more Heads have invested in, or

are planning to invest in, technology that allows remote lockdown features and visitor management.

Campus Audits: Member schools have been conducting safety and security audits, often with the assistance of local law enforcement or third-party security experts. Nearly every Head of School referenced the important role that local law enforcement plays in their crisis management plans.

Personnel: Citing limited financial resources, most member schools do not have staff for safety and security. Only 4 of the 15 Heads interviewed confirmed that they have some type of dedicated position for a school resource officer. While schools might not have a full-time position in place, there are conflicting opinions about non-law enforcement carrying concealed firearms.

Crisis Management Plans: SCISA schools recognize the importance of developing crisis management plans in response to targeted violence on campus. Plans may differ based on the individual characteristics of each institution, but it is evident that independent schools are taking safety and security seriously and that emergency responses are documented. These plans include specific procedures that faculty and staff should follow in the case of emergency.

2. How do Heads of School perceive safety and security issues for their communities?

A Top Priority: Heads cited safety and security as one of the top priorities for their organization and believe it should be a requirement for SCISA accreditation. The interviewees unanimously indicated the importance of this topic and almost all explicitly cited safety and security within their top three institutional priorities. Given its high prioritization, however, few schools specifically address the topic in their guiding mission or vision statements.

Resources: SCISA schools do not feel they have sufficient resources to carry out the layers of safety and security measures needed. Their financial models are often inadequate to cover upgrades and enhancements through tuition revenue alone. Instead, auxiliary revenue such as philanthropic contributions and additional fees are required.

Complexities: School leaders are faced with an array of challenges and tradeoffs related to meeting their safety and security goals. Effective strategies are considered in context of the unique institution, its resources, goals, stakeholders, and mission.

3. What are the facilitating conditions and barriers to implementation of new safety and security initiatives?

Size and Relationships: Independent Schools value the small size and personalized nature of their communities. According to NAIS, in 2019 the median student to teacher ratio was 8.5 students to every teacher. Faculty and administration are able to invest greater time and resources into each individual child's academic and social-emotional well-being. The relational elements are fundamental to the independent school environment and allow adults to better identify behavioral changes as part of their violence prevention efforts.

Stakeholder buy-in: The majority of Heads referenced faculty buy-in as the most important element of successful implementation. Identifying and securing key influencers within the faculty and staff prior to organizational rollout increases the likelihood of successful adoption. Continuous communication and education facilitate influencer support. Members of the community benefit from repeated guidance on emergency preparedness and response. Organizational leadership should be visible and vocal stewards of new initiatives. School leaders need to effectively demonstrate the priority of safety and security to all stakeholders within the organization. Heads may consider articulating such prioritization through the adoption of revised guiding documents; ongoing communication to faculty and staff; intentionally incorporating the philosophical underpinnings into existing structures; and reinforcing stated expectations. Buy-in has the greatest chance of successful adoption when decisions are framed within the school's mission and guiding values.

Campus size and infrastructure: Despite the varied campus layouts, school Heads identified the challenges associated with both the sizes of their campus as well as the design of the hard structures that were not initially built with safety and security in mind. Creating new physical structures, adding surveillance, and retrofitting outdated facilities to meet current needs have become greater priorities.

Recommendations

Project recommendations are segmented into separate categories: a) Three opportunities for the SCISA organization to bolster ongoing work on school safety and security, and b) Two prevailing practices that would prove beneficial to individual member schools in their crisis management efforts.

SCISA Recommendations

Policy: Association leadership can influence safety and security prioritization through continued use of the nascent Safety and Security Committee and adoption of policies that reflect an official position that is incorporated into organizational artifacts. No explicit statement or guiding

document currently exists. Demonstrably presenting a collective ethos heightens awareness and strategic implementation across the association.

Professional Development: Collective intelligence and shared expertise will benefit the entire association. Individual member schools currently incorporate violence prevention and response training into their faculty development programming. However, scheduling constraints limit the frequency and depth of training to group sessions that either take place prior to the start of classes or sporadically during service days mid-year. SCISA can leverage technology to broaden accessibility and produce on-demand content that is not restrictive in nature. An array of digital training sessions could be conducted remotely. The traditional in-person practice is often burdensome--requiring participants to travel to association headquarters, which presents various opportunity costs for member schools. SCISA can also fill a current deficiency in the social emotional space by identifying counselors and mental health professionals among the member school population.

Accreditation Requirements: SCISA leadership charged the Safety and Security Committee with making a recommendation on safety and security requirements for accreditation. The survey and interview findings strongly support the adoption of mandatory safety and security audits. Consistent reviews of crisis response plans and facility assessments should be a requirement for SCISA accreditation.

Member School Recommendations

Relationship with Local Law Enforcement: Schools benefit from a strong partnership with local law enforcement officials. Conducting training sessions as well as facility audits allow law enforcement personnel to develop a familiarity with both the physical structures and pervasive culture of each unique institution. Qualitative findings overwhelmingly indicate the importance of member schools initiating such a relationship and then intentionally cultivating on-going engagement.

Initiating Lockdowns: Incident notification and rapid facility lockdowns are effective strategies to limit access, accelerate law enforcement response time, and subsequently mitigate casualties. Embracing the utility of mobile devices can prove beneficial when identifying a potential threat on-site. Properly trained personnel can use various communication software to signal a community-wide alert, with enhanced technology systems providing remote locking functionality. It is not in the best interest of schools to be limited to traditional hardwired notification systems. School crisis plans should reflect advances in technology and leverage mobile devices as a valuable management tool.

I. Literature Review

School Violence and Prevention

A series of high-profile school shootings has spurred national attention to the topic of targeted school violence. Following the mass homicide at Columbine High School in Colorado in 1999, the US Secret Service and the Department of Education engaged in the *Safe School Initiative*, defining targeted violence as school shootings and other school-based attacks where the school was deliberately selected as the location rather than a random opportunity (Vossekuil et al, 2002).

Spanning from 1981 to 2010 the number of mass school shootings has nearly doubled (Agnich 2015.) CNN conducted an investigation into school shootings at K-12 institutions, which showed that shootings are on the rise with approximately 180 cases occurring between 2009 and 2019 (CNN, 2019).

While incidents of targeted school violence have increased over this time, the actual likelihood of a mass school shooting is rare, accounting for less than one percent of all annual homicides in youth ages five to eighteen (Modzeleski et al, 2008). Despite school shootings being such an infrequent occurrence, the gruesomeness and public attention they generate indicate an inflated sense of danger (Cornell, 2005). Schools typically engage in highly reactionary practices following a school shooting despite the fact that little empirical evidence exists to support the effectiveness of safety and security measures (Borum et al, 2010). However, research has been conducted that shows schools where students have a high sense of feeling safe tend to have higher academic achievement scores (Gronna & Chin-Chance, 1999). These findings are in alignment with Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Maslow suggests that an individual's basic needs, such as safety, must be met in order for cognitive capacities to be engaged (Maslow, 1943).

While the majority of research on targeted school violence has focused on public institutions, some studies indicate private schools have higher self-reported ratings for school climate and safety (Shakeel & DeAngelis, 2018). Independent schools have been implementing additional crisis prevention and response measures as a result of heightened concerns. According to the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), a recent study suggests that the primary reason parents seek independent schools is because their current institution is failing their child either academically, or not provide a safe learning environment (NAIS, n.d.) In an effort to intentionally differentiate themselves from their public school counterparts, independent schools cite their small class sizes and the individual attention they show their students (NAIS, n.d.). Based on a series of 22 case studies, some research suggests that school enrollment significantly predicts mass school shootings--schools with larger enrollment are more likely to experience mass homicides (Baird, Roelke, Zeifman, 2017). Despite their perceived size advantage, independent school leaders recognize their vulnerability to targeted school violence and have incorporated additional safety and security measures into their operations and programming (Schwartz, 2013).

Project Questions

1. To what extent are schools implementing safety and security measures?
2. How do Heads of School perceive safety and security issues for their communities?
3. What are the facilitating conditions and barriers to implementation of new safety and security initiatives?

All three of the project questions incorporate elements of the Four Frames model by Bolman and Deal. This project is intended to improve both the SCISA organization as well as the actions being taken by member schools. Bolman and Deal found that while many organizations embark on well-intentioned changes, they fail to understand the underlying dynamics (Bolman & Deal, 2017). Research shows that the frames enable leaders to “expand their capacity and see more of what’s going on. (Bolman & Deal, 2017, p.419).” Each of the project questions benefit from consideration of the four lenses, which provide insight into how current Heads of School are currently addressing the changes associated with safety and security measures in an effort to meet the needs of today’s independent school communities. The most effective leaders use multiple frames in their decision making and have an awareness of the layers of complexity associated with change management. Bolman and Deal write, “Leaders face a paradox: how to maintain integrity and mission without making organizations rigid and intractable (Bolman & Deal, 2017, p.420)”. The qualitative analysis conducted lends itself to segmenting actions and decisions within the framework to determine how schools are managing such a balance in the face of competing needs, stakeholder expectations, and resources.

The Four Frames

Independent schools can benefit from leading and managing new safety and security initiatives through the “Four Frames” model, which is elastic enough to address an entire sector such as K-12 education (Fleming-May and Douglass, 2014). Presented by Bolman and Deal, the Four Frames approach addresses organizational management through the following lenses: structural, human resources, political, and symbolic (Bolman and Deal, 2003). When leaders incorporate all four frames into their decision-making, there is greater conscientization for all stakeholders and a higher likelihood of success for change management (Moen, 2017). Bolman and Deal suggest that successful managers are able to reframe, or use multiple frames, to understand a complex situation and develop more effective strategies for solutions rather than a singular framework alone (Cirka and Corrigan, 2010). Research conducted on effective public school administrators shows that nearly half utilize three or four of the frames consistently (Durocher, 1996).

Structural

When addressing safety and security issues, school leaders must consider the organizational architecture and design of the institution. It is useful for leaders to delineate between the basic parts of the organization as well as the means by which they will coordinate their work (Mintzberg, 1980). The organizational hierarchy, crisis management plans, safety policies, and

physical features of the institution all relate to the structural framework. Long term implementation is most successful when there is shared power and leadership whereby all parties in the organizational chart are taken into account (Moen, 2017).

Human Resources

School leaders incorporate the needs of their stakeholders with those of the organization. While some schools have personnel solely dedicated to safety and security oversight, all members of the community depend on proper training and knowledge in the event of a violent event. Repetition forms automatic responses that allow stakeholders to successfully react to high-stress situations (Brunner and Lewis, 2006). Organizations must be aware that attention to training is amplified following a notable crisis; however, they are cautioned not to allow training efforts to subside once the event is out of immediate attention (Ishikawa and Tsujimoto, 2009).

Political

The political frame is based on decision making and allocating limited resources in situations where interests are not always in alignment (Bolman and Deal, 2005). Issues of power, conflict, and ethics are all intertwined within the political frame. Independent school leaders report to a Board of Trustees who determine the effectiveness of the leaders' decisions on the well-being of the organization. The parent body is often the most difficult constituency to satisfy (Lewis and Wilson, 2013). The independent school business model is driven by tuition revenue and parents have a vested interest in the school. Heads of School balance the input and involvement of parents with the needs of the organization, which has the potential to create friction when interests diverge. In both public and private schools, the administration's communication with parents has the potential to forge an effective partnership that supports, and advocates for, the institution (Granowsky et al, 1979).

Symbolic

The way that stakeholders derive meaning from the school's actions and decisions represent the use of the symbolic frame. Independent schools differ from public schools in both their operational and financial management, as well as being led by a unique institutional mission (NAIS, n.d.). There is an incredibly wide range of independent schools and one way to determine whether an institution is faith-based or specialized is to analyze the school's mission (Boerema, 2006). Mission statements may be concrete written artifacts, but it is the underlying philosophy that allows schools to create their own unique culture within the community. This culture is the "glue that holds an organization together and unites people around shared values and beliefs (Bolman and Deal, 2003, p.243)."

Implementation Science

Project Question 3: What are the facilitating conditions and barriers to implementation of new safety and security initiatives?

The third project question provides insight into successful conditions for organization change. In order for new safety and security initiatives to be effective and lasting, independent school leaders can benefit from implementation science. Empirical findings suggest that effective leaders are able to respond to contextual conditions (Warwas, 2015). When practitioners incorporate the context for their decisions as well as the beliefs and values of the organization, new initiatives have a greater chance for success (Nordstrum et al, 2017.) The intricate and unpredictable settings of schools require leaders to take into account, “social, perceptual, attitudinal, and value-based characteristics as well as existing frameworks for action, including ethics, resources, and policy directive. (Kelly, 2012, p.5)”.

Implementation has a greater chance of success in a school setting when there is faculty training, support from leadership, dedicated resources and capacity, and incorporation into operations (Kelly, 2012). From the faculty’s perspective, research indicates that facilitating factors for program success include support from leadership, commitment from individual stakeholders, relevancy to the school’s goals, and consistency with the organization’s values (Freeman et al, 2014). School leaders must consider three phases of the implementation process that include planning prior to rollout, the processes of the actual initiative, and continuous feedback and monitoring.

II. Contextual Analysis

The South Carolina Independent School Association is a non-profit voluntary association of independent schools, which was established in 1965 with only seven member institutions. It has grown to a membership of 126 schools that represent four geographic regions within the state: 1) Upstate 2) Midlands 3) Lowcountry and 4) Pee Dee. The first three regions have some member schools that benefit from larger population centers based around the cities of Greenville, Columbia, and Charleston respectively. Beyond the reach of those cities, however, the SCISA member schools are ultimately rural in nature. The schools with the largest enrollments and prestige are located in these urban centers, while rural institutions struggle to maintain viable enrollment and often cite resource limitations.

Independent private schools are not only for the elite, but there has been a shift in family demographics. While they have traditionally served a range of income levels, independent schools are now facing a harsh reality of a steady decline in the middle class with low-income enrollment remaining limited (Squire et al, 2019). The depletion of the middle class has created an even greater reliance on families who are able to pay the full tuition without financial aid assistance. The business model for private schools is completely different from the public sector. There is a reliance on enrollment to drive tuition revenue, which accounts for the majority of the operating budget. It is very rare for schools to fund the entirety of their programming through tuition alone--there is typically an annual gap that needs to be accounted for through a variety of other sources. Schools are increasingly looking for additional income streams from auxiliary services such as camps, facility rentals, or after-school programs; however these auxiliary services often have hidden costs and do not account for a significant portion of the operating budget (Daughtrey, 2016). Given that enrollment often dictates a school's ability to invest in strategic initiatives, the schools with larger student populations tend to feature greater safety and security measures.

In 2018 SCISA hired a new President who noticed the disparities between the safety and security efforts within the association's member schools. Following the widely recognized school shooting in Parkland, FL the SCISA President made a concerted effort to add the topic of safety and security to his initial agenda, making it an explicit priority as part of his new administration. In 2019 he formed the inaugural Safety and Security Committee, composed of approximately 10 sitting Heads of School and law enforcement experts. This committee was tasked with reconciling the wide range of strategies currently being implemented at various member schools and to derive best practices that SCISA institutions could consider. Ultimately, the President asked for a recommendation as to whether the association should establish some form of safety and security requirement for both initial and ongoing accreditation.

III. Methods

This study employs qualitative methodology to address all three of the project questions. Data was acquired through two processes. The first was an open ended survey completed by 12 current Heads of School. Information was gathered at a regional convening and participants were invited to fill out a survey that asked each school to list the following aspects of their safety and security programming:

1. Strengths
2. Weaknesses
3. Opportunities
4. Challenges

Data gathered was then coded based on the Four Frames model by Bolman and Deal (Appendix A). Each item listed was categorized by its association with the structural, human resources, political, and symbolic lenses. The following terminology dictated classification:

Structural	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Physical characteristics of campus 2) Financial resources 3) Specific protocol or procedural documents
Human Resources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Staff dedicated to safety and security 2) References to training 3) Relationships with external parties such as law enforcement or security experts
Political	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Power 2) Influence 3) Feelings of stakeholders
Symbolic	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Cultural norms 2) Values 3) Mission

The second qualitative method used was a series of interviews with 15 Heads of School within SCISA. Interviews were conducted over the phone and utilized a series of seven consistent primary questions, with secondary prompts, as the basis of the conversation. Notes were taken to reflect both general feedback to the questions as well as specific quotes. Participants were quoted when there was a particular emphasis or example provided during their response. Each of the interview questions was deliberately designed to address areas of safety and security within

Bolman and Deal's Four Frames Model in an effort to provide insight into all three of the project questions (Appendix B).

Six of the participants were selected due to convenience, and were identified based on professional familiarity through both regional and personal networks. Additional participants were randomly selected from a contact list of SCISA schools. Primary outreach was directed towards non-Lowcountry institutions in an effort to diversify the sample. Sixteen requests for participation were sent to sitting heads, with 9 affirmative responses and 7 unresponsive, reflecting a 56% participation rate. Overall, 15 out of the association's 126 member schools contributed to the interview data, which constitutes 12% of the population.

Given the diverse profiles and missions of each institution, an effort was made to include Heads who represented a broad range of institution types. The majority of participants represented institutions that manage multiple divisions (lower, middle, high). There is also a strong presence of faith-based schools within SCISA and the sampling was intentional to reflect both secular and religiously-affiliated communities.

Number of Schools	Institution Type
2	Specialty-Learning differences
6	Religious Affiliation
1	Grades PreK-6
1	Grades K-8
2	Grades 6-12
1	Grades K-12

10	Grades PreK-12
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Number of Schools	Region Represented
2	Upstate Region
3	Midlands Region
6	Lowcountry Region
4	Pee Dee Region

Data collected from the open-ended survey and interviews contributed to the findings and ultimate recommendations for SCISA. All topics must have been raised by the participants on at least three separate occasions in order to qualify as a viable theme that warranted attention in the report. Both methodologies were incorporated into the findings for all three of the project questions.

Limitations

The survey analysis was based on a convenience sample that was limited to schools located within the Lowcountry region of SCISA. With 12 responses, the sample represented approximately 10% of the entire association. Given that SCISA is divided into four regions, the

sample may not be generalizable throughout the entire state association. While suburban schools participated in the survey, there were a greater number of schools with proximity to the city of Charleston and have enrollment profiles that might not be reflective of a rural population.

There was overlap between four of the interviewees who were also part of the open ended survey sample, which creates the potential for some of the findings to be skewed due to perceived emphasis. This convenience sample was vulnerable to selection bias since a previous relationship was established with approximately 40% of interviewees, some of whom were familiar with my previous work in relation to safety and security initiatives at my respective organization.

Despite efforts to invite equitable participation across regions, there were fewer responses from member schools located in the Upstate and Midlands Regions--both with 3 or less participants in the interview process. Fewer responses to outreach attempts could have been a result of a lack of professional overlap and existing relationships.

There was not sufficient data available to delineate between small, medium, and large enrollments. However, I was able to determine that the school with the lowest population typically serves about 30 students per year, while the largest school in the sample has approximately 1,000 students enrolled.

Participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity during the interviews; however, the sensitive nature of safety and security measures could have impacted responses. There may have been occasions in which a respondent felt information was proprietary in nature and was less forthcoming about measures within their crisis management plans. Additionally, Heads could have been influenced by the public scrutiny surrounding schools taking safety and security precautions; as a result, their responses may have been elevated to reflect either greater prioritization or action that has not been validated.

IV. Findings

Project Question 1: To what extent are schools implementing safety and security measures?

Finding 1: Training

SCISA schools are familiar with myriad drills as part of state, federal, and association mandates. Non-security-related training such as fire drills, weather-related drills, and health procedures suggest independent schools have formed beneficial habits of training that lend themselves to incorporating violence prevention. All 15 of the schools interviewed acknowledged training that takes place annually--specifically for safety and security initiatives. The format in which training occurs varies, with the majority of schools focusing on disseminating information to faculty in group settings. These meetings take place either during pre-planning sessions or during scheduled professional development throughout the year. Some schools take a different approach and believe smaller groups, potentially segmented by primary facility-use, offer greater accountability and adoption. Most schools tend to practice intruder alert or lockdown drills two times while school is in session.

Active shooter training has increased in recent years. Schools are proactively reaching out to local law enforcement agencies and frequently rely on their guidance. Heads tend to promote candid interaction and want their faculty to understand the realities surrounding the potential for an active campus assault. Practical exercises promote both competency and confidence among the faculty in an effort to mitigate potential trauma.

Several schools noted the importance of introducing unexpected variables into their regimen. While faculty can react instinctively to standard drill protocol, it is in their best interest to experience adaptations that include intentional disruption and intervention. One Head commented, "That was helpful--getting them to feel better and visualize. It became real and they feel like they have more control over the situation." Examples include sending non-authorized individuals to seek classroom entrance during lockdowns, adjusting facility accessibility, or accounting for missing students or personnel.

Deficiencies

1. Training is too narrowly focused on teaching faculty and the classroom setting alone. Non-academic personnel appear to receive insufficient guidance on their role in the event of an active threat on campus. School operations are not limited to the scheduled class time and training should reflect more areas of operations, including: transition periods, assemblies, and extracurricular activities.

2. Student preparedness has been limited to drills, but devoid of important foundational conversations that contextualize the reasoning behind the exercise itself. Schools want students to be ready in case of a crisis, but they also worry about unintended consequences. An interviewee explained that, “Young students are particularly sensitive and their parents are communicated with ahead of time. Additionally, there are several students in older divisions who suffer from post traumatic stress disorder and they are pulled from drills.” Another school interviewed is shifting away from conducting active shooter drills with students altogether, claiming “it’s too traumatizing.”
3. Heads expressed a notable concern that schools are comfortable reacting to drills when convening during a standard school day. However, there has not been an emphasis on practicing drills during special gatherings or occasions when students are participating in after-school activities or athletic events. Time constraints prevent administration from expanding training beyond the classroom setting as expressed by one Head who admitted, “You can’t do all that in just an orientation.”
4. The focus of training is on violence response and prevention. Only 2 respondents addressed the issue of mental health or emotional well-being. One school even proactively addresses mental health and any violent tendencies in the admission process, stating, “I don’t mince my words. Be honest. It would be an issue all the time if they [families] don’t respect the safety and security measures.” Schools have an opportunity to train their faculty on the social-emotional health of their students, including warning signs or behavioral changes that could manifest in violence.

Finding 2: Technology

Advances in technology have positively impacted the way in which Heads both prevent and respond to crises. There have been two main barriers to technological improvements: 1) cost and 2) community willingness to accept perceived inconveniences. Not only has the financial burden of technology become more manageable to include in a school’s operating budget, but the majority of community members have increasingly come to expect such an investment. This modern willingness to adopt technology features is attributable to the intensified sensitivity caused by recent acts of school violence that gain mass attention.

Schools are installing security cameras with greater frequency, which provide surveillance features to key personnel and allow them to access footage remotely from a mobile device. One Head emphasized their importance and said, “If money wasn’t an object, I’d have cameras throughout campus and someone to keep an eye on them.” Survey responses reflect significant value placed on the addition of cameras, with 40% of participants independently noting the

benefit of either having cameras currently installed or recognizing the potential for further additions.

The greatest area of technological interest lies in facility access. Schools are taking an approach to funnel incoming traffic through a central access point and then take measures to appropriately document and identify constituents on campus. Parents and guests are expected to follow sign-in procedures, but more schools are considering the adoption of digital visitor management systems versus traditional paper methods. These systems provide additional layers of sophistication and technological capabilities that would otherwise require a greater investment in time and personnel oversight alone. Standard procedures require individuals to provide photo identification, but these digital systems are more advanced. They are able to log information into a database and can even offer various levels of background checks before being saved for future review if necessary. Unique badges can be printed out that time-stamp entry and provide a recognizable identifier when the guest is on campus. School personnel have the ability to oversee guest activity at any given time and can monitor any abnormalities. Schools with greater financial resources that are located in an urban setting are more likely to have already adopted these visitor management systems. However, suburban and rural schools who once perceived these systems to be cost-prohibitive are increasingly embracing such an investment.

The focus of attention has been on building access for students and faculty. There is a noticeable shift to more schools adopting card reader systems and installing doors with remote locking mechanisms. Students at several SCISA schools have become accustomed to utilizing lanyards for visual identification, and the access badges can then either be physically swiped or held within proximity to the digital readers for access. At any given time, an administrator can account for the attendance of students. The benefit of such a system is that doors can automatically be set to lock at certain times throughout the day, particularly when classes are in session. The incorporation of a locking system reduces the chance of a potential intruder gaining unauthorized access to a school building. The adoption of these devices is not only effective in practice, but the presence of such features could act as a psychological deterrent as well.

The functionality of mobile devices has evolved to a point of critical importance. There has been widespread adoption of some form of mobile software that allows school leaders to both signal an intruder alert internally, as well as send mass communications during phases of response and recovery. During the interviews, one respondent said with relief, "I do like being able to totally lockdown the whole school." Schools had been utilizing hardwired telephone systems or their computer networks to initiate alarms and relay messages. Having a digital tool to accelerate the campus-wide notification system as well as initiate law enforcement response has the potential to save lives. A study conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation found that 70% of active shooter incidents last less than five minutes (FBI, 2013). The accessibility of new mobile software allows school officials to better address the time-sensitivity of these violent acts and initiate a campus-wide lockdown at a moment's notice. When a lockdown is in effect, the mobile applications also allow administrators to push appropriate notifications to parents and communicate post-crisis.

Deficiencies

1. Training and comfort level--Schools are disseminating technical information to their faculty and provide well-intentioned guidance on crisis response. However, they may be overlooking one of the primary goals, which is to instill confidence in their employees. Promoting confidence and ownership throughout the organization better prepares teachers in highly stressful situations (Timm, 2014). Overcoming the psychological hurdle of initiating a lockdown in the case of suspicious activity or fostering instinctual responses in a highly emotional state warrant deeper conversations to instill confidence in the people on the front lines.
2. Personnel--In addition to financial constraints, Heads recognize the opportunity costs associated with the addition of new technology. Increased capabilities with both on-campus enhancements as well as control over security management via mobile devices are only as effective as the operators utilizing them. It was clear that schools devote human resources to safety and security in various forms, typically through designated school resource officers or dispersed responsibilities among crisis management teams. However, it was unclear whether there was a designated point-person on staff who is fully versed in the technology, is able to troubleshoot technical problems, and serves as a resource for colleagues who require additional assistance. Time must be allotted to allow these primary responders to fulfill their safety and security duties.

Finding 3: Campus Audits

Following the tragic 2012 shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, CT multiple states passed legislation that required public schools to conduct safety and security audits. The purpose of such an exercise is to review a school's physical plant and identify areas to mitigate risk in the case of a potential targeted act of violence. Public schools in South Carolina are required to have a safety plan and conduct two active shooter/intruder alert drills per year, but facility audits are not yet mandated (Education Commission, 2019.) With only a single exception, all independent school Heads interviewed either have experience conducting a campus safety audit or spoke to the value of adopting such a requirement for accreditation.

SCISA schools benefit from forming a partnership with either local law enforcement or securing third party experts who help conduct these campus audits. Local officials often provide services at no cost, while professional consultants can warrant a significant investment of both time and financial resources. One school was presented with a \$60,000 pricetag for a 3-year consulting partnership and another brought in outside experts, calling it a "5-6 year process."

Most schools have some form of collective body, either a task force or sub-committee, who oversee the audit process. One participant in the interviews identified their Board of Trustees as playing a role by crafting their Facilities Committee to include safety and security oversight. When undertaking the audit, schools should be intentional about incorporating diverse perspectives from various stakeholders (NAIS, 2013). One school interviewed found it valuable to bring parents into the process on a sub-committee level and shared, "We identified the right

person with passion and expertise in safety and security, and ended up including him on the task force. “ While faculty are predominantly involved in the audit exercise, non-teaching staff, students, and parents, can all add unique insight that puts the use of campus facilities in broader context. The findings of the audit are prioritized by the administration and then serve as the basis for a multi-year phased implementation plan. When either substantial capital investment is required, or recommended measures could affect the culture of the school, the Head will work in consultation with the Board of Trustees.

Deficiencies

1. Threat Assessment Policies--None of the interviewees explicitly mentioned an adoption of formal threat assessment practices. However, the multi-step process is taking place in other school environments around the country. Threat assessment is a violence prevention technique that incorporates both assessment and intervention in the school setting. Multidisciplinary teams create procedures that allow members of the community to identify and communicate behavioral concerns to the administration for possible intervention. Research conducted by the FBI concluded that in the vast majority of school shootings, the perpetrator had shared their violent intentions with classmates in the preceding days and weeks (O’Toole, 2000).

The majority of schools are focusing on hardening their campuses with the installation of physical security features aimed at preventing violence. Alternately, the safety of the community can also be addressed through behavioral science techniques such as threat assessments. Developed by the U.S. Secret Service, threat assessment has gained traction within the educational sphere. Data on the application of threat assessment in school settings has been limited to public institutions and higher education. Research on its effectiveness has already influenced several states to require public school implementation, with Virginia leading the way in 2013 and Florida, Kentucky, Maryland, Texas, and most recently Washington following suit (Sawchuk, 2019).

2. Non-monetary improvements--Schools with modest to sparse budgets can be both reluctant to pay for outside expertise, and fear that their campus deficiencies will require an investment of capital that simply does not exist. Heads conceded that, “Our budget is so small,” and even, “Anything we do has to be an additional fundraiser.” The financial pressures on most SCISA schools is evident throughout the survey and interviews conducted. When asked what prevented school Heads from implementing safety and security measures, one interviewee appropriately captured the shared sentiment by the majority of peers by stating, “I hate to say it, but finances.” Given the fact that local law enforcement typically offers their services at no charge, they can serve as an invaluable resource for campus facility audits. Additionally, not all security measures require expensive technological investment. Schools can benefit from multiple perspectives to assess the best way to safeguard constituents within the unique framework of their particular infrastructure. Opportunities to identify creative uses of space and modified protocol can prove effective in lieu of a capital overhaul.

Finding 4: Personnel

SCISA Heads are in favor of personnel focused on safety and security at their schools. Often driven by Board and parent pressure, the last few years have seen a rise in the number of schools acquiring full-time staff in this area. The methods used by schools to meet such a need depends on their financial resources and school culture--either internal appointments or outsourcing security.

Interviewees pointed to contractual agreements with local law enforcement agencies who supply their schools with a full-time officer. There is a cost associated with retaining these professional services, but some schools acquired school resource officers (SROs) at reduced rates. While it varies by county, independent schools have advocated for their right to obtain personnel by citing inequitable services that are currently provided to public schools. With a large percentage of families paying taxes within the county, these independent schools have been able to convince local officials to make SROs available, which they then compensate subject to county guidelines.

A controversial topic that independent schools face revolves around concealed carry permits. The overwhelming sentiment shared by Heads interviewed was to prohibit firearms on campus for anyone other than official SROs. In fact, one school's philosophy against guns drove their personnel decision. Despite being one of the few institutions that has adequate financial resources, they opted to staff unarmed security forces instead of law enforcement agents--it would be antithetical to their school culture. There are exceptions, however, with some of the more rural members endorsing concealed carry permits for well-trained staff who often have military or law enforcement backgrounds. Given the sensitive nature of guns in schools, all of the Heads agreed that their Board of Trustees would play a pivotal role when taking an official stance.

Deficiencies

1. Inconsistency--SCISA schools do not operate in a vacuum. An array of interscholastic activities require independent schools to travel to other campuses where their philosophy on concealed firearms may not be shared by members of the opposing community. Those interviewed acknowledged a sense of tension associated with reconciling the well-being of their community members with the need to partner with, and compete against, other schools. Specific to athletics, schools are designated into divisions based on the size of their student population. Larger schools are required to pay for law enforcement oversight at contests. However, it has been deemed cost-prohibitive to set such a requirement for schools in lower divisions.

Finding 5: Crisis Management Plans

All interviewees noted that their institution has some form of safety and security plan or a crisis management plan that incorporates campus lockdown protocol for events like an active shooter threat. Experts agree that it is not only important to have a plan in place, but also to implement

the plan by emphasizing leadership, teamwork, and responsibility (Cornell & Sheras, 1995). SCISA schools are demonstrating these effective traits. “It starts with me,” said one Head, “it needs my full involvement and participation, modeling and consistency.” Another interview commented on the shift in mindset to better frame the importance of teamwork, “It’s a shooter for everybody--that mentality has to be pervasive throughout the institution.” Two different Heads followed up on the importance of accountability, both on the part of the leader as well as all members involved in the crisis management process.

Knowing that this sample of 15 various types of schools has 100% adoption of such plans is a positive indicator for the rest of SCISA members. When compared to public institutions, these independent schools have adopted emergency plans at a higher rate. A 2007 study conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics found that only 49.9% of schools with 1,000 or more students have crisis management plans; the figures are even more deficient for those academic institutions with fewer than 1,000 students (Alemu, 2009). Additionally, trends in the K-12 educational landscape are often derived from implementation first taking place within higher education. An analysis of crisis management plans within colleges and universities shows that approximately 68% of institutions have plans to address an active shooter on campus (June, 2007). SCISA schools appear to embrace the realities associated with the need to lock down campuses and initiate protocol in the event of a violent threat.

Deficiencies

1. Review--It was unclear whether schools are actively reviewing and testing their safety and security plans on a regular basis. It is not enough to simply establish plans that exist for accreditation purposes alone. Instead, they must be tested repeatedly for maximum effectiveness. Of the colleges surveyed by the Chronicle for Higher Education, 57% of colleges and universities had tested their crisis management plans, with only 25% of those schools having done so twice or more in a year (June, 2007).

Project Question 2: How do Heads of School perceive safety and security issues for their communities?

Finding 1: A top priority

All of the Heads interviewed indicated that safety and security is a high priority at their respective institutions. The majority of respondents either listed it as the single most important factor at their institution or ranked it within the top three areas. A major takeaway from these interviews includes the fluid nature of constituent interest in safety and security and increased scrutiny being placed on schools within the last few years. In the course of discussing schools’ reactions in response to public outcry, a respondent shared their approach to investing in security

measures by saying, “It’s a sliding scale. When identified, they are very much a priority; then we start to ease off them.” While most everyone agrees that additional layers of protection can add to the safety of a school, there is not adequate independent research to prove that technology-laden campuses will actually save lives (Associated Press, 2018). Another Head even appeared to be frustrated by the pressure placed on them to implement additional measures. They do not perceive some investment to be as great a priority when compared to other strategic needs. Exasperated by the subject, this Head flatly told me, “All our schools are vulnerable. There is inherent vulnerability when you put 700 kids on a campus.” The changes in prioritization can be attributed to mass attention in the wake of recent school shootings such as the 2018 attack in Parkland, FL. Research conducted by the FBI suggests that news coverage has a dramatic effect on the public’s expectations for school leaders to take immediate action; however, news disseminated to the public skirts root causes of the violence and often lacks critical information, especially confidential insight from law enforcement regarding the perpetrator’s prior behavior and activity (O’Toole, 2018).

Deficiencies

1. Words and Actions--While schools were unanimous in proclaiming safety and security as a top priority, there is an apparent conflict between their stated ethos and some of the activity actually taking place. When asked during the interviews if their school has any wording in their mission statement regarding safety and security, only a single school replied in the affirmative while one more claimed that, “Obviously, it is implied.” During interviews it was expressed that, “There may be a philosophy, but nothing you can point to.” Another reaction was, “There is no mention of safety and security in the materials, but it probably should be.” If leaders signal campus safety as important, and research has emphasized its appeal to independent school families, then there is a potential opportunity to highlight the attention paid to ongoing efforts beyond the existence of an internal safety plan.

Schools typically point to their mission and vision statements, along with a set of core values, which form their decision-making process. There is limited evidence to suggest that these guiding artifacts adequately capture the stated level of importance placed on safety and security by school leaders. Few of those interviewed have explicit verbiage dedicated to this topic. In fact, only one of the schools interviewed has a mission statement that includes the word “safe” in its language. Some of the respondents, however, suggested that the lack of language is not suggestive of their commitment to the well-being of their community members. Instead, they claim that the very nature of safety and security is implied in order to accomplish their goals and deliver on their missions.

Additionally, they point to either strategic plans or crisis response plans as being sufficient markers that incorporate their institution's commitment to safety and security.

Finding 2: Resources

More than any other variable, independent school leaders point to ongoing financial constraints as the primary hurdle to security enhancements. "Everyone wants it," said one Head, "but there are financial limitations." Another leader pointed to technology expenses in particular and shared, "There's always more we can do, or would like to do, but there's the cost factor until technology costs come down." When safety and security is perceived to be a strategic change, independent school business models will need to adjust and include altering staffing levels, facilities use, and marketing strategies (Garber & Palmieri, 2020). In the meantime one interviewee expressed a shared sentiment that, "Within monetary constraints, we implement the best we can."

The role of philanthropy appears to be a viable source of revenue to address the increasing sensitivity and awareness of safety and security. Several of the Heads interviewed noted that they either have individual donors who are passionate about contributing to security needs, or they have cast a wider net by promoting community-wide fundraising initiatives. Few of the SCISA schools have well-established endowments that provide an annual draw to cover operating costs. Instead, the majority of institutions rely on philanthropic contributions to offset expenses each year. Schools are constantly faced with challenges to ensure that the cost of tuition captures both standard inflation as well as rising operating costs, let alone the addition of any strategic initiatives.

Deficiencies

1. Fundraising tension--While new projects have the best chance of striking a chord with potential donors, parents are leery of contributing money beyond their expected tuition to address areas they deem as management's responsibility to maintain. One head noted that, "[Parents] might fund new programs and projects, but they feel the school has a responsibility to cover operational needs through the budget." Safety and security projects gain traction when they are appealing to the families and include tangible or visible campus infrastructure enhancements or technological upgrades that would ordinarily fall beyond the bounds of standard operations. Examples given by interviewees include a new security gatehouse, cameras, and an identification system. However, non-cosmetic improvements that are difficult to articulate face obstacles for adoption. One school head takes advantage of foundation grants, but expressed a focus on only presenting structural enhancements because there is a greater chance of funding.

Finding 3: Complexities

Tradeoffs abound as school leaders implement any changes to safety and security within their respective communities. Several Heads noted that there is a fine line between new security measures and having their school feel like a “prison.” In addition to obvious financial and human resource constraints, independent schools must constantly consider the cultural context of their decisions. Parents are primary stakeholders within SCISA schools, but there can be a disconnect between their desire for greater safety measures and the perceived inconvenience or suggested detriment to school culture. Schools interviewed reported that the majority of parents are supportive of their actions. However, critics arise when they believe that either their level of access, or their students’ comfort, has been negatively impacted. Examples can include: school uniforms; lanyards; ID/access cards; additional surveillance; delayed traffic patterns; or additional protocol that is expected as part of a school’s visitor management procedures.

Heads consistently articulated the need for clear and transparent communication with parents. New initiatives have the best chance of success when they are presented with a strong rationale that is grounded within the institutional framework of a school mission or vision. Criticism tends to subside when any inefficiencies are either mitigated or put into context with the overall safety goals. Additionally, Heads point to the temporal nature of parent criticism. New measures are generally more palatable when they take place in the wake of mass violence. Media coverage is unavoidable and inevitably causes a sense of fear, panic, and vulnerability. Prompt attention and response to crises can reduce the extent of angry feelings (Cornell & Shera, 1995). These feelings manifest in the parent community and are linked to administrative changes.

Deficiencies

1. Tuition--To meet parent concerns about safety and security schools are inclined to invest in new measures. It is not feasible to expect the annual operating budget to cover these costs, and as a result, tuition increases should be expected. However, price-sensitive consumers are constantly considering their options between a private school education and the cost-free public school options (Garber & Palmieri, 2020). One Head of School commented, “If I asked our families for \$400, which are predominantly dual income, it would not sit well.” Independent schools are encouraged to point to their unique value proposition as a differentiator, but there is a price-elasticity associated with families’ willingness to absorb additional increases that meet security expectations. The goal for Heads is to ensure that as the price of tuition increases, so too does the perceived outcome (Daughtrey et al, 2016).

Project Question 3: What are the facilitating conditions and barriers to implementation of new safety and security initiatives?

Finding 1: Size and Relationships

The most consistent strength reported by Heads in the survey was that their schools are intentionally small environments where faculty know their students well. One survey response read, “Knowledge of everyone, small school, everyone knows everyone else (strangers stick out).” Another Head cited school size and culture by writing, “Small--students are known well,” and “Culture--respectful and caring.” The attention to class size and total enrollment is a fundamental component of independent schools’ value propositions. Heads believe that the relational nature of their work allows faculty and staff to address potential acts of violence by promptly recognizing changes in behavior. While the overt fear of violent acts taking place is disproportionate to actual events, precursors such as bullying are much more prevalent (Juvonen, 2001). Small communities are more conducive to addressing the needs of students as far as disciplinary issues or mistreatment of classmates. Private schools are required to follow internal policies set forth by their handbooks, but they do not have to adhere to the same standards of public schools. As long as the administration is fundamentally fair and is neither arbitrary nor capricious, then they are meeting their legal obligations (NAIS, 2016). Private schools have less barriers to intervention.

Not only is size alone a perceived strength, but the inculcation of cultural norms has the advantage of manifesting within the independent school setting. Faith-based schools point to their spiritual roots and religious principles, while secular private schools address social-emotional concepts through their mission and core values. These existing frameworks allow schools to impart consistent ethical standards and behavioral expectations that address the social and emotional wellness of their students. The inherent flexibility within private school settings also allows for adjustments to scheduling and programming when situations warrant additional attention or reinforcement.

Deficiencies

1. Balance--There is a cultural tension between the need to mitigate risk and implement new safety and security measures, while recognizing an inherent inconvenience for members of the community. The addition of safety and security measures fundamentally comes at the expense of what can be perceived as a more impersonal experience.
2. Reporting structures--While schools talked about knowing their students well, there was limited mention of how, in fact, they go about reporting potential student concerns and subsequent intervention. Individual crisis management plans might provide insight into

each institution's policies and procedures, but interviews did not reflect any formal processes.

3. Vulnerability--Research does reflect a greater likelihood of violence taking place within larger school settings, but it does not mean that small independent schools are completely immune either. SCISA schools with adolescents should recognize that 25% of the population are at high risk for psycho-social problems and poor developmental outcomes, with 20% having a diagnosable mental health disorder (O'Toole, 2000). Regardless of total enrollment, schools who teach adolescents need to recognize that they have community members that are susceptible to mental health issues. Subsequently, several Heads during the interviews mentioned that security measures can only prevent violence to a certain degree. It was expressed on several occasions that Heads believed an individual who wants to do harm to a community will find a way around most of the structural barriers. "We live in a bubble. We have a false sense of security just because it's an isolated group of people," said one Head. Schools have an obligation to plan and defend themselves to the best of their ability, but even the most fortified institutions remain targets.

Finding 2: Stakeholder buy-in:

When implementing new initiatives at their schools, Heads pointed to the critical importance of stakeholder buy-in, particularly with the faculty. Several interviewees suggested that programs are most successful when they percolate from ideas initiated by the faculty and staff rather than a "top-down" approach. Once a new initiative is validated and feasible, the administration should identify key influencers--both the potential advocates and critics. Recognizing which stakeholders are supporters and detractors allows an organization to form a more strategic communication plan (Kangas, 2011).

Independent schools often tout their emphasis on being a community and emphasizing their familial nature (NAIS, n.d.). When rolling out a new initiative, particularly when it comes to safety and security, there ought to be clear communication that fosters a shared responsibility between the school and the students' families. Recognizing each institution's cultural norms is vital; these symbols shape a community's reactions to change or proposed improvements (Askew, 2000). Yet again, the mission of the school is of paramount importance and serves as a beacon of commonality for all stakeholders. In response to one of the interview questions regarding conditions for successful implementation, Heads referred back to their respective missions. "Go back to the mission of the organization--it clarifies and unites people around new initiatives." Another Head provided a list of facilitating conditions, but cited mission as a priority, expressing that any new program or initiative must be in line with the mission of the

school. In any community there will be a multitude of opinions, but if a new program can be rationalized within the context of the mission, and can be proven to benefit the organization's goals, then there is a better chance of stakeholder buy-in. Over the course of the interviews one Head expressed how they perceive their role as a steward of the mission, claiming, "My job is temporary. Fulfill the school's mission and leave it better for the next person."

Participants indicated an increase in stakeholder buy-in when leadership shares in the process. The Head of School needs to be perceived as a visible proponent and facilitator. A respondent expressed the need for the Head to be able to explain decisions that are not perceived as "whimsical." One description included, "The leader must be authentic with their own personal style. They must also communicate and educate their constituents honestly." Echoing the Head of School as the mouthpiece for new initiatives, another interviewee said, "When you do something, you explain it." From the interviews it was widely apparent that leadership plays a vital role in communications. Another respondent expressed, "There must be a level of clarity with communicating measurable goals as well as explaining "why" the school is doing what they are doing."

Utilizing guiding documents such as the mission, or framing a new initiative within a well-structured Strategic Plan, lends credibility to the potential value the new program will have on the institution as a whole. Ultimately, school goals should be structured around areas of consensus throughout the organization. Once priorities are established, leadership should craft communication plans to familiarize stakeholders. Constituent outreach should be continuous in nature--goals that are based on static communication are not successful. Heads should be actively involved in the communication process to remind faculty, students, and families why certain actions are being taken.

Deficiencies

1. Initiative Fatigue--School leaders need to consider new projects or programs in context with the success or failure of recent initiatives. There is the potential for staff burnout as a result of constantly changing initiatives or improvement efforts (Mendenhall, Iachini, & Anderson-Butcher, 2013). Leaders should be gauging the sensitivity of stakeholders to change prior to any formal rollout.
2. Feedback loops--The majority of schools touched upon the administration's emphasis on reinforcing priorities. However, there was minimal dialogue referencing bilateral communication. Feedback loops should be welcomed during program implementation as stakeholder input fosters shared responsibility and allows the administration to make

necessary adjustments. It was unclear from the interviews whether SCISA schools are consistently incorporating dynamic feedback loops into new program implementation.

Finding 3: Campus size and infrastructure

In addition to limited financial resources, schools overwhelmingly cited their campus layout and aged infrastructure as weaknesses within their safety and security programs. The public's hyper-sensitivity to school shootings did not surface until the mass media attention beginning in the 1990s with Columbine. SCISA schools who participated in the survey and interview were predominantly established prior to this time, or they inherited facilities whose construction pre-dated such universal awareness of targeted violence. Only recently have construction projects taken the risk of active shooters into account for their actual design. Examples of measures being taken include: curved walls to cut down on line of sight; the installation of bullet-proof glass; and creating spaces that can be compartmentalized through locking mechanisms (Chambers, 2020). There is no lack of awareness among SCISA schools, who are considerate of violent acts when both constructing new facilities as well as retrofitting existing structures.

SCISA schools are taking different approaches to addressing their unique campus vulnerabilities. Those who can form a protective perimeter have chosen to do so. Others have supplemented a lack of external barriers with the acquisition of security personnel as referenced earlier. Heads have consciously changed their vehicular entry and exit points to funnel traffic to limited access points. Once the school day begins, facility access is limited and efforts are made to direct visitors to a central check-point. Based on the interview findings, schools appear to be addressing their campus safety from the outside-in, bolstering internal systems should threats penetrate external layers.

Deficiencies

1. Perimeters--SCISA Heads pointed to their perimeters as the first line of defense for potential threats. Most of the rural schools with large acreage expressed concern about the "open" nature of their settings. It is not feasible for them to install fencing, either due to financial constraints or the sheer footprint of their property.
2. Non-academic hours--There is a noticeable intention to focus on the restrictive nature of campus access during the school day. However, independent schools often have activity on campus that extends well beyond academic hours, with childcare programs and extracurricular activities taking place both before and after classes. The ability to close

campus during the school day is appropriate and valuable, but campuses are exposed to additional risk due to the nature of their programming after-hours.

3. Campus aesthetics--There is the perception that the addition of security installations around campus comes at the expense of beautification projects and general aesthetics. One school received significant pushback when building a security gatehouse with students and parents initially critical of its appearance, claiming that it detracted from the look of the overall campus. However, over time, perspectives shifted and several years after implementation the constituents have reversed course on initial impressions and now cite the facility as an enhancement.

V. Recommendations

Based on survey and interview findings, recommendations have been categorized to reflect suggested opportunities for improvement to both SCISA as a collective body, as well as to individual member schools. Both entities can benefit from attention to these areas and thereby forge a stronger partnership to promote safety and security across the independent school landscape.

A. SCISA Recommendations

1. Policy: SCISA should adopt a policy on the prioritization of safety and security. Such a commitment can be achieved through the incorporation of appropriate verbiage into existing organizational artifacts or in the development of future initiatives such as a strategic plan.

A policy statement can act similarly to a mission statement, which articulates a guiding framework that is both structural and symbolic in nature. Such statements fail to be enacted when organizations have large and diverse sets of stakeholders, there is comfort with the status quo, or there is perceived controversy (Ireland & Hirc, 1992). With the formation of the Safety and Security Committee, SCISA leadership has already proven a willingness to reevaluate its efforts within this domain. The environment for implementation is ripe, given the overwhelming sentiment expressed by interviewees who see community safety as a top priority. Despite the vast differences among SCISA schools (size, location, grade levels, missions, etc.), findings suggest there is already universal stakeholder buy-in. When considering the political frame, violence prevention is a controversial topic inasmuch as schools value their autonomy. A policy from the association could encompass universal sentiment without violating member schools' authority or discretion.

2. Professional Development--Stakeholders derive value from an organization's outputs (Ireland & Hirc, 1992). SCISA currently offers a multitude of professional development opportunities that are focused on academics and curricular practices. As independent schools evolve and greater emphasis is placed on their operational viability, the association's professional development offerings should follow suit. The potential ramifications of a member school becoming a victim of a school shooting would be devastating for that institution. Assuming the school would remain solvent, there would be large and persistent impacts on the mental health of the students (Rossin-Slater et al, 2019). SCISA has an opportunity to address noted structural and human resource deficiencies within the member schools by offering multiple forms of training, including : 1) active shooter response and 2) crisis counseling.

Individually, schools struggle with their capacity to devote time, energy, money, and personnel to such training. One interviewee noted, "There is not enough time for people who are designated to have safety and security roles to be more active." School personnel currently feel stretched and adding more responsibilities can become overwhelming and

ineffective. The majority of respondents train their faculty on active shooter threats at the beginning of the year or during scheduled staff work days. SCISA could play a role in offering ongoing support and training throughout the year, thereby relieving schools of the entire weight of responsibility. Leveraging technology, participation and varied levels of training can be acquired through on-demand content.

One of the deficiencies noted in the interviews was the limited focus of training on faculty. The human resources at independent schools are not static, as new staff members and volunteers become active throughout the course of the year. The current model for training is insufficient to address the time-sensitive onboarding and orientation for safety and security practices. As noted, crisis management plans are specific to the context of that particular community--its culture and environmental setting. However, SCISA could provide best practices to complement the school-specific training.

Not every school has the human resources to address mental health issues. Several of the SCISA schools have trained counselors, but numerous institutions lack the personnel on staff. SCISA could serve as a shared resource and build a portfolio of content suited to social-emotional health. Additionally, the association could affirm the intention of partnering with school counselors to potentially be deployed to member schools in the wake of a violent event.

3. Accreditation Requirements: Among the fifteen school heads interviewed, every school saw value in requiring some form of standards for the accreditation process. Equally important, however, is the need for the association requirement to be flexible enough to fit the many different types of organizations. Schools expect consistency and accountability when implementing a mandated set of practices; therefore, SCISA needs to structure its accreditation requirement in an equitable manner that can be managed judiciously and effectively.

The exercise most frequently mentioned was the confirmation of a safety and security audit. Conducting a regular assessment of both campus facilities and crisis procedures was determined to be a reasonable expectation for all member schools. Such a fundamental exercise would not discriminate against any schools and would be in alignment with the association's commitment to safe learning communities. The Safety and Security Committee could be charged with providing specific guidelines, which would set the frequency of the audits.

B. Member School Recommendations

1. Relationship with local law enforcement:

Irrespective of financial resources, one of the most valuable steps an independent school can take is forming a strong partnership with local law enforcement. Proactively reaching out to establish a relationship and then cultivating familiarity with the campus and the community is of the

utmost importance. Law enforcement has the expertise to contribute to both safety audits as well as training among key stakeholders. Heads interviewed felt reassured to have an established relationship with officials who are in close proximity. “They are going to be the first ones on the scene,” said one school official. It is in the best interest of each member school to have consistent communication with, and accessibility to, law enforcement personnel.

2. Initiating Lockdowns:

Not every member school can change facility access systems and upgrade doors to remote locks. However, there should be an expectation that all schools have the capability to remotely initiate a lockdown alert to community members. One school Head accurately captured shared sentiment when they commented, “You can have all the drills you want, but you need to lock it down in a hurry.” A reliance on hard-wired landline systems alone is antiquated and does not adequately meet the needs of our institutions. Mobile devices have become so ubiquitous that there is a reasonable expectation for schools to utilize modern day security platforms. The incorporation of such mobile functionality allows personnel to accelerate response time, which improves the chances of law enforcement intervention and translates into fewer casualties.

VI. Conclusion

The public's attention to school shootings is disproportionately higher than the actual occurrence of a targeted act of violence taking place. Independent schools are not immune to violence; however, survey and interview findings reflect perceived strengths to include size, structure, and culture. While SCISA Heads believe there is continuous opportunity for improvement, evidence supports shared sentiment that private schools are holistically conducive to mitigating risk and promoting a sense of safety among community members. Heads of School are confronted with making complex decisions about the allocation of resources to meet modern-day demands. Utilizing Bolman and Deal's Four Frames model, project findings suggest schools with the most effective approaches utilize multiple lenses to account for the unique challenges posed to their particular community.

Safety and security measures should be tailored to the needs of each school rather than assuming a general set guidelines for prevention and response. As a result of survey responses and interviews, recommendations are segmented to reflect improvement opportunities for both the SCISA association as well as member institutions. Leadership's commitment to safety and security can be reinforced by clear policies and requirements while also sharing talent and expertise through professional development. Member schools are encouraged to utilize local law enforcement as a frequent partner in their safety and security programming as well as leverage technological platforms to maximize communication. Successful implementation of these recommendations will require school leaders to communicate a clear direction and commitment that fosters shared responsibility and stakeholder buy-in.

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Appendix A

School Participant	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Challenges
School 1	Faculty and Staff Awareness	Open Campus	More cameras	Pushback from all constituents
	Location	College Style Campus	Staff dedicated to security	Money \$\$\$
	Community Security Officers			
	Planning in place			
School 2	Bi-Monthly Drills	Lighting of campus at night		Costs-SRO, equipment
	Staff training	Gym/Playground (Contact during an emergency)		Drop off/pick up procedures
	Design of buildings promotes security			Development plan for emergency situations during athletic competitions
	Sonitrol			
	Visitors passes			
School 3	Knowledge of everyone, small school, everyone knows everyone else (strangers stick out)	Large campus very spread out	Leverage/deploy technology to assist us in the security area	Tourists, visitors to the area come to see our grounds on campus (tour groups, wedding parties.)
	Police presence nearby (station 1 mile away)	campus sort of "open"		
School 4	Soft lockdown at all times while students present	Low resources		Low/limited resources
	lanyards	Very small school		lack of staff diligence with ensuring classroom doors are locked
	uniforms	Apathy as it relates to reality of security <u>need</u>		
	radios (2 way)			
	3 barriers in place before classroom doors are accessed. Center door requires buzzing in. Front door must be buzzed for entry.			
School 5	Keeping outside doors locked at all times	Not having security officers on campus	having more cameras on campus	Cost
School 6	Close relationship with town police	Our school is in close proximity to the county detention center and the courthouse	Training with local law enforcement agencies	Money \$
	Presence of off-duty police officer for 4 hours per day			
School 7	On campus capacity to neutralize armed threats versus waiting for all responders	No fence, low quality entrance gates	fence and gates	funding
	Resource officer on campus throughout the week (thankfully this is a service provided by Charleston County and we don't have to pay for these services)			

School 8	Our main entrance has a security system		There are several things we can do to improve that we've included in our 5 year plan including: installing security cameras and installing bullet proof windows)	Our facility is a shared space (church) There are 14 entrances and we only control 4 of them
School 9	Electric door locks that open with key cards	students tend to hold the doors open for parents being "polite"		Open campus- several buildings not connected by walls--students must walk to art building, etc.
	Cameras across the campus			
School 10	visitors must be buzzed in			
	Limited entry points	multiple buildings	chance for parents/students to have ownership of many parts	limited funds for upgrades-cameras, locks, commo (?)
School 11	trained people on campus	just off the interstate very visible		
		on same campus as church very accessible		
School 11	Draco group partnership (F/S Training)	Campus layout	Threat Assessment Team (counselor? sp?)	Budget
	Director of Safety and Security		Further F/S training	Today's teenage culture
School 12	Small-students are known well	multiple campus buildings	improve safety plan	remote location in Jasper county
	culture-respectful and caring	lack of coordination with local law enforcement	conduct more drills	
	good campus visibility		better preparation	
	staff training (individual screening)			

Appendix B

Interview Questions	Relation to Project Question	Frames Anticipated	Frames Actually Observed
1. Where does the topic of safety and security fall for you as a priority?	Question 2	Political and Symbolic	Human Resources, Political, Symbolic
2. Is there anything that holds you back from achieving your safety and security goals?	Questions 1, 2,3	Structural and Human Resources	Structural, Human Resources, Political, Symbolic
3. Given the culture at your school, how does your parent community feel about investing resources towards prevention, preparation, and response to potential acts of violence?	Question 3	Political and Symbolic	Structural, Human Resources, Political, Symbolic
4. Are your faculty required to take active shooter training--is it voluntary, or does it not take place?	Question 1	Structural and Human Resource	Structural, Human Resources, Political, Symbolic
5. Do you have a mission or vision statement for your safety and security efforts?	Questions 1 and 2	Structural and Symbolic	Structural and Symbolic
6. Should there be some requirement for safety and security initiatives as part of a school's accreditation process?	Questions 2 and 3	Structural	Structural, Human Resources, and Political
7. Irrespective of safety and security, what are the key characteristics for any type of new program approved by the administration to be successfully implemented at your school?	Question 3	Structural, Human Resources, Political, Symbolic	Structural, Human Resources, Political, Symbolic

Interview Question 1		
	Interview Findings	Quotes
School 1	S&S is a top priority and plans are reviewed every year	Near the top...top 2 or 3
		We feel responsible
School 2	Top 3	Obviously one of the top things in the last few years
	They used to have a sub-committee of the Board specifically for the topic of S&S	When you talk to parents it is their #1
School 3	S&S efforts are a priority	At the top. You have to have that first.
School 4	#1	Main priority every year
School 5	At or near the top	
	Physical and emotional safety was brought up, not just physical	
	It sounded like there was an element of enrollment playing into decisions of safety and security	If folks don't feel your school is safe, they won't come or they'll leave
School 6	#1	I believe that you cannot work, learn, teach in peace if there is any semblance of a threat
	There are always going to be threats	
	Unique perspective with personal counseling background, as well as having a spouse formerly in law enforcement who transitioned to be a chaplain and first responder.	
School 7	In the top 3	
School 8	It changes.	It comes in fits and starts. There was a big push 2 years ago.
	Family surveys state "safety" as the #3 reason families choose this school. #1 was rigorous academics #2 was a place where the student is known	As we educated, it got better.
	Much time is spent thinking about it.	
School 9	Stated as a top priority.	On a scale of 1-10, it is a 10.
	Invested in the structures and personnel for improved safety and security.	We put in a safety gatehouse. We are a fenced and gated community. Hired a former SLED agent and first responder. We can control who is on campus.
	There was a 5-6 year process for the school to do their due diligence and identify their safety and security needs. Experts were brought in.	
School 10	Very important. So important that the school has moved it up the list of priorities	
School 11	High priority, but not static. The school chooses to promptly address its deficiencies when they are identified. They focus on prioritization of specific safety and security measures.	It's a sliding scale. When identified, they are very much a priority; then we start to ease off them.
School 12	#1	
School 13	Very important	Really Huge. For a lot of different reasons. COVID completely changes your practices.

School 14	#1	Certainly #1. That's the critical aspect of an independent school.
	This Head made reference to the NAIS research done on what jobs parents want independent schools to play...with academic and a safe environment being the top 2.	
School 15	Stated that safety and security is the top priority.	As it should be...#1. Period.
Interview Question 2		
School 1	Finances. Low tuition	
	Rural location	
	S&S through fundraising. Not simply tuition revenue alone	Anything we do has to be an additional fundraiser
	No designated security person	Small school. Everyone wears a lot of hats
	They have an emergency plan. Lockdown and intruder drill practices 2x	
	Teacher training at beginning of the year	
	Several specialists come in	
School 2	Financial limitations	
	Physical campus	
School 3	The campus layout poses problems to reconcile secure perimeters	
	The school does not have the financial resources it needs	
	In recent years the school has acquired a Sheriff's Deputy who is dedicated to that campus during school hours and is on site	I wish we didn't need one, but I've seen schools that do everything right, but still something bad happens.
School 4	Finances	
	Lower School was more secure than Upper School. Greater technology and resources invested in the more vulnerable members of the community.	You can practice all the drills you want, but you need to lock it down in a hurry.
	Schematics of the buildings provide challenges--the layout was never designed for active shooters	
School 5	Financial Resources	
	Campus systems (old vs. new) not being in sync	
	There is a relationship with the Charleston police department and they rely on their close proximity of the school campus to the police department.	
	There is no point-person for safety and security	
School 6	Finances	Our budget is so small

	Personnel are incredibly supportive	
School 7	Finances	There's always more we can do, or would like to do, but there's the cost factor until technology costs come down.
	There are no designated officers, but there are a couple people with significant training who might have concealed firearms	
	There is a very good relationship with local law enforcement. The Sheriff's department did an analysis (audit) for free.	
School 8	Campus layout. The size of the campus and inability to afford enclosing the entire perimeter.	
	There is a school resource officer provided by the county sheriff's department.	The Board said we need him
	Financial resources. It is hard to charge families more and balance that financial investment with what is feasible	
School 9	Financial resources. This school chose to charge a fee in the tuition. It started as voluntary the first year and then it became a mandatory fee the second year	
	General vulnerability.	All our schools are vulnerable. There is inherent vulnerability when you put 700 kids on a campus.
School 10	Financial constraints.	I hate to say it, but finances.
	Time. The administration does not feel like there is enough time for people who are designated to have safety and security roles to be more active	There is not enough time for people who are designated to have safety and security roles to be more active.
	In terms of personnel, they created a hybrid role for one of their teachers who oversees safety and security in addition to teaching 4 classes.	
School 11	1. This school does not see financial resources as a major hurdle for them, but they do recognize that funds are not limitless. They strategically invest in their prioritized measures. For them, they identified gates as being a top priority, followed by visitor management and then cameras.	Generally, we have the financial resources.
	2. With personnel, they identified the need to add security guards. These security guards are employed by the school and do not carry a firearm.	

	<p>3. Cultural hurdles. This head expressed the need for consistency and balance when it comes to cultural changes. Processes and procedures are 80-90% in place, but there are perceived cultural hurdles. They have to take into consideration whether the measures feel like a burden to visitors. Examples were given regarding group events (e.g. admission open house or a ceremony) where they had to determine if they should keep the policy and require everyone to go through the sign in process or make exceptions--they decided that it was worth the "burden" and that they should hold firm to consistent policies. They use a Raptor visitor management system that costs approx. \$3,000. There are situations in which some parents are on campus all the time and they needed to make a decision about how to manage their visits. It was a change in culture to make them sign in each time.</p>	Most people appreciate it.
School 12	Initial reaction was to cite financial resources, but upon further consideration this Head felt they had invested a good amount into safety and security.	I started thinking especially about financial resources. I could always do more. We have devoted a good portion of our overall budget.
	They have a full-time school resource officer (SRO) from the local Sheriff's department--that individual ended up having their son attend the school and was fully invested in the mission and well-being of the institution. Initially, the Sheriff said every school in the county would have an SRO, but this independent school did not receive an assignment. They happen to be a faith-based school and there was argument over whether any public funding should go towards an SRO at a Christian school. The Head advocated strongly, citing their constituents being tax payers as well, and ultimately secured an SRO.	
	They have cameras and a visitor management system	
	Open campus. 35 Acres. No fence or gate.	
School 13	Concerns around staffing and not having enough personnel, especially in light of the COVID virus.	I may have as many as 30% of my staff out

	Political elements were noted around the new dynamics following the Coronavirus since this Head believes state politicians are unlikely to ever close business and quarantine once again. Staffing issues must take place in light of this political observation.	
	Being strategic with budgeting for safety and security. An example was given where all the doors and windows could be changed for approx. \$500,000 but instead they chose to spend far less money on a former FBI agent who did a safety and security assessment in conjunction with local law enforcement. They developed different mitigation strategies rather than solely investing in structural enhancements.	
	Working with local law enforcement is very important.	They are going to be the first ones on the scene
School 14	Financial piece is lacking. They do not have the financial resources.	Within monetary constraints, we implement the best that we can.
	They do not have the human resources or staffing that can adequately meet their needs	
	12 acres of land at the corner of 2 major roads. There is a fence that surrounds the entire property with 5 gate openings. They close 4 out of the 5 openings during the day. There is 1 access point that is within eyeshot of the front office and the Head of School. It has a security lock on the front door and can be electronically locked/unlocked with remote capability.	
	The introduction of the Coronavirus has impacted their operations	With COVID-19 everything has changed--for teachers, staff, and students.
	With additional financial resources the school would be investing in cameras as well as personnel to monitor them	If money wasn't an object, I'd have cameras throughout campus and someone to keep an eye on them.
	Someone was hired to assess their campus and presented a \$60,000 3 phase program for implementation	

	This head referenced what another school did with a security gate and personnel manning the shed for visitors. They said that peer school's business model allowed them to charge a special security fee per family, which they thought was approximately \$400. Such an additional fee was not feasible for this school.	If I asked our families for \$400, which are predominantly dual income, it would not sit well.
	3 active shooter drills per year	We've got a good plan in place
	The Board has had the discussion about concealed carry firearms and they do not believe it is a good idea.	I don't like the idea of having it in the classroom
School 15	There are no constraints that hold this school back from achieving their safety and security goals. They claim it is because they are located in a wing of a church and have adequate staffing.	
	There are no busses to be concerned about. Parents drop their children off and the staff is right there.	
	No one is allowed on campus without permission.	
	The only issue cited was their location near an impoverished neighborhood that is said to be dangerous	
Interview Question 3		
School 1	Parents deem safety and security as really important	We live in a bubble
	Sense of security	[We have] a false sense of security just because it's an isolated group of people
	Culture is important	Parents want it, but they want it to still feel open and not prison-like. It's about finding the balance
School 2	Financial constraints	Everyone wants it, but there are financial limitations
	Balance was mentioned yet again	Typically there is outcry that we need it, but at the same time they complain about it being an inconvenience
	Difference between public and private schools	Parents are proud that we are not public schools
School 3	There is support among the parent body and they've shown such backing through both philanthropic contributions and justified tuition increases	Parents are all in support
	This school leader claimed unanimous support to hire an on-site Sheriff's Deputy, but even with the addition of the position, there were politics involved with who would fill the role.	Politics comes into play with everything

School 4	Parents are very supportive (citing all 3 schools where this individual served as Head-Pk-12 and PK-5)	
	Parents raised the money for keypads	
	When there is proper communication, parents are more accepting of the changes and willing to support them financially.	
School 5	Philanthropy was brought up. There is an annual fund that covers operating expenses. Parents in this community are less likely to contribute to ongoing safety and security initiatives.	They might fund new programs and projects, but they feel the school has a responsibility to cover operational needs through the budget.
School 6	Very positive and supportive parents	
	The inconvenience factor. Instances where some parents felt the school was "going over-the-top"	Sorry if I inconvenience you. I won't play around when it comes to the safety of the kids.
School 7	Very supportive parents. They support locks on the doors, cards to swipe into buildings, a number of fences	
	Some parent contributions specifically for safety and security features	
School 8	The school has not wanted to raise money for safety and security purposes.	It's a balancing act. Make parents feel better about being safe.
School 9	Improvements and upgrades have been very well-received.	I think it's all embraced as security vs. inconvenience
	There is a balance needed between added safety and security measures and remaining relational in nature.	We want to be personal. You're going to have to embrace the inconvenience.
School 10	There does not seem to be any opposition to implementing new safety and security measures.	
	In the past, they have earmarked funds from fundraising events towards safety and security.	
School 11	Parents are involved in the process and participate on sub-committees so that they are actively engaged. Because they identified the right person with passion and expertise in safety and security, they ended up including him on a task force, which ultimately resulted in a large individual donation.	We identified the right person with passion and expertise in safety and security, and ended up including him on the task force.
	In additiona to the operating budget, this school does solicit funds from foundations for safety and security needs--specifically structural enhancements (better chance of approval.)	

	<p>Parents are perceived to be reactionary. As a result, the school tries to mitigate such a response and emphasize priorities within a strategic plan. However, there are also "opportunities" in which security improvements are able to be implemented because they have the community's attention. An example would be following the high-profile shooting at Sandy Hook--the community was accepting of changes.</p>	
	<p>Overall, parents have appreciated a steady progress. Seeing tangible measures and a clear plan creates support and confidence. There are a couple parents who felt inconvenienced and did not want to have to take an "extra step."</p>	
	<p>Any decision regarding firearms would have to occur at the Board level and need their permission. This school chose unarmed security guards. The Head has thought about hiring a Director of Security and possibly arming them. That person would have a SLED license and a background in law enforcement. They do have off-duty police for events, but not on a daily basis.</p>	
	<p>The observation was made that there are two approaches a school can take depending on their unique qualities. If they have a secure perimeter and structural systems in place, then there is less need for official security personnel. However, a school with an open campus that lacks defenses might choose to invest in armed security.</p>	
<p>School 12</p>	<p>For the most part, parents have been supportive. They had been used to traveling in and out of buildings freely prior to the new security measures being implemented. It was initially an inconvenience, but it has since become routine.</p>	

School 13	Safety and security measures were led by a task force and prior to general dissemination the Head had parents involved in small groups	
	This school had what the Head referred to as a "scare." After experiencing potential danger, it affected the way community members looked at the serious nature of violence prevention.	Everyone was on board after that
	The concept of "risk" was mentioned. This Head noted that there is a conflict between creating an environment where there is freedom for the children, which everyone desires, but at the same time making it safe.	
	2 Anonymous donors who are passionate about safety and security have been able to accelerate implementation. Rather than phased in approaches that were approved in the budget by the Board's Finance Committee, these donors felt it was in the best interest of the school to potentially get a better cost by implementing measures all at once (Example of a robust electronic slip key system.)	
School 14	They have a committee on the Board that serves as both the facilities committee and the safety and security committee so parents are involved in that capacity.	
	They are putting together a facilities list after parents asked for a list of needs at a recent town hall meeting. The Head of School is considering asking for a resource officer as part of that list.	
	This school invites parents who visit the school for admissions to fill out a survey and one of the questions they ask is related to the comfort level the family feels while on campus.	
	The school values its family-oriented culture and they are in the habit of noticing people on campus who should not be there. Faculty stop and ask.	

	Parents at this school are "very leery" of any tuition increase	That's one of the hot buttons.
School 15	Parents have not played a major role in safety and security	Parents haven't really said much. Everyone is a little lax. Not a priority for the parents. But the moment you get lax, that's when something happens.
	One change was made that required parents to be present when arriving at school. In the past they had just dropped them off	
	Claims some parents were a little irritated when they changed pickup procedures at the end of their after-care program, which required the parents to come inside and sign children out.	Generally, as long as you can explain it and it makes sense, they're ok with it.
	This school benefitted from having a longstanding head prior to leadership transition and the parents trusted her. They said that parents very rarely received phone calls from the school during the day and parents assumed their children were well cared for.	
	Talked about the culture difference at her school when compared to prior position in another state. Does not believe firearms should be on campus.	You can't have firearms, some child is going to get shot.
Interview Question 4		
School 1	All staff get trained, not just teachers	
	They feel prepared with lockdowns in the building, but a weakness/concern would be if an attack occurred outside the normal academic day	
School 2	In-service training	
	They have a police force for the residential community, which has jurisdiction, as well as local law enforcement for the town	
School 3	Training from Sheriff's Department at the start of the school year	
	Currently just teachers, but there is the belief that support staff and others, like part-time coaches, need to be trained.	

School 4	Faculty are trained during school pre-planning, as well as throughout the year with refresher videos and training.	
	2 Intruder drills per semester. 4 Total.	
	Relationship with local law enforcement is important	
School 5	Faculty meetings	
	Code red drills	
	Shifting away from conducting drills with students	It's too traumatizing
School 6	Husband is certified as an FBI chaplain	
	Importance of utilizing connections to experts and law enforcement	I ask them not to hold back
	Population of children has mental health issues	
	Faculty are trained to identify signs of concern and behavioral changes	
School 7	Key personnel and teachers attended a workshop	
	Police department does some training, but was not specific about frequency or timing.	We did a lot. A lot of scenarios we worked on.
	Lockdowns	
School 8	Training takes place more often for events that are more likely to happen than active shooters (e.g. CPR, stop the bleed, AED, etc.)	
	Active shooter (run, hide, fight) takes place every other year.	
	Introduction of Punchalert software has been helpful, both with the actual crisis management as well as goodwill.	Good marketing to parents
School 9	There is annual training. usually twice per year on a teacher work day.	
	Drill 2x per year with students and try not to make it scary	
	Example provided of extreme measure taken to mimic a SWAT team's entry into the room. The faculty were intentionally not told about the impending exercise and there were some individuals who suffered trauma as a result. The administration chooses not to repeat this exercise. While it was effective in the sense that it brought the seriousness and severity of the scenario to life, there were detrimental consequences among the faculty and staff as well.	I wouldn't recommend it. Teachers cried, shaken, but this is what it actually feels like. It's a harsh reality--an impression was made.

	Creating a goal of response being instinctual	
School 10	Training takes place for faculty usually once per year during pre-planning or after Christmas break.	
	An external speaker comes in and assists them with training for the ALICE training for active shooter threats.	
	Drills 2x per year with students	
	Partner with local law enforcement	We have a great working relationship
	Training in smaller groups is effective	
School 11	Training takes place at various times depending on what the school feels it needs to work on improving.	
	There is a crisis response team and they receive a higher level of training than other staff.	
	More training has occurred over the last two years. This school engaged a security consultant.	
	Theory vs. Practice. This school takes an approach to train in smaller groups and implement different protocol based on the personnel and buildings. They believe that approach is more effective than a full faculty and staff setting. There's a shift from the theoretical to the practical, and it allows them to be more creative during the drill.	
	Training is expensive and takes a lot of time. They had 12 different training sessions	You can't do all that in just an orientation.
	Training benefits include an increase in confidence among the faculty, especially for those who were initially nervous.	That was helpful--getting them to feel better and visualize. It became real and they feel like they have more control over the situation
	Additional training was voluntary and conducted as creative offensive tactics rather than self-defense. Approximately 40% of the staff chose to participate in the voluntary training.	
School 12	Training done in conjunction with local law enforcement. They fire rubber bullets so that the faculty can familiarize themselves with the actual sound of a firearm being discharged.	
	Great relationship with the fire department. They walk the buildings together with the SRO as the main coordinator	

	Lockdown drills take place like fire drills throughout the course of the year.	
	This Head noted the culture associated with being very rural. Many of their constituents do have concealed carry firearm permits. However, the Board and the SRO would have to be involved with any decision related to concealed carry authorizations on campus. Upon the recommendation of local law enforcement, they strongly prohibit firearms on campus (there is signage at every entrance that states concealed weapons are prohibited.) .	It has been brought to the Board level and they said 'absolutely not.'"
School 13	Most effective training has taken place through online platforms	
	Balancing drills with the social-emotional well-being of the students.	Young students are particularly sensitive and their parents are communicated with ahead of time. Additionally, there are several students in older divisions who suffer from post traumatic stress disorder and they are pulled from drills
	Repetition is important and staying up to date with new procedures	It takes more than one drill.
School 14	They have been training faculty for active shooters in the last few years. Law enforcement comes on campus and they shoot blanks so faculty can hear the sound.	
School 15	No training.	None. I haven't even thought about it. That's a good idea--we might do that.
	Lockdown drills	
Interview Question 5		
School 1	No specific mission or vision statement	
	Safety manual is beside every door, which is a constant reminder	
School 2	Mission does mention the word safe	I think there is...
School 3	A safe and secure campus is one of the 5 categories in the new Strategic Plan. It has an explicit goal attached to it.	
	There is no explicit mention of safety in the mission statement, nor a stand-alone S&S vision.	
School 4	Not specific. Blanket statement that might be in the handbook.	Probably wouldn't be a bad idea.
School 5	Not specifically	

School 6	No reference in mission or vision, but there is a policy in the handbook	
School 7	There is an emergency management plan.	
	Repetition is important for teachers to get used to the training	You have to repeat because the teachers will forget
		It's in the news and kids bring it up. It comes in waves. It bubbles up more when there's a shooting.
School 8	Safety and Security is incorporated into the Strategic Plan, but not the mission or vision.	
School 9	There is no mention of safety or security in their materials	But it probably should be
	Mission and vision were revisited in Fall 2019 before the COVID virus.	
School 10	No mission statement and not explicitly mentioned in their guiding documents, but they do have a crisis management plan.	
School 11	There is nothing explicit in their guiding documents about safety and security.	There may be a philosophy, but nothing you can point to.
School 12	There is nothing specific. There is a crisis management plan, but nothing else.	I had to think twice about that.
School 13	This head feels that their school's mission-statement is not explicit about safety and security, but that the concept is embedded in the language.	Obviously, it is implied.
	No specific mention in the Strategic Plan.	
	It's more important to this Head that community members follow the hallmarks that they live by, which includes caring for others. They cited the example with the current COVID situation where some people will wear masks, not for themselves, but because it is caring about the well-being of others. They felt that some people simply act in ways that are selfish and contradictory to their school's values.	Like any school you have political ridiculousness. [We] make it clear that we'll do the ethically responsible thing.
School 14	The Board committee on facilities and security does have written goals or guidelines	

School 15	No written statements or documents other than an emergency plan	You know, we don't. I was looking at the mission and vision and wondering, "Is this even relevant?"
	While nothing is currently in place, there is interest in adopting verbiage that speaks to safety and security	I'm thinking about starting from scratch. We do not have anything, but I would definitely consider it.
Interview Question 6		
School 1	Yes	I do. It's such a huge issue now
	It was noted that each school has unique differences so the accreditation standard must take these differences into account	Each school needs to explore what they do
School 2	Yes	Nowadays, it's just as important as anything else a school does.
	All schools are different so the criteria for accreditation cannot be the same for all. Some sort of good faith effort needs to be demonstrated	The school should be able to show they're making an effort and thinking it through
School 3	There should be a requirement, but it should not be rigid.	At least know what a school has done and plans to be done.
School 4	Schools should have a safety and security audit.	Just like every other checklist.
School 5	Yes, but there needs to be flexibility	It's tricky given the number of different situations schools find themselves in.
	The expectation of an audit was reasonable	
	Yes, there should be a requirement for accreditation	
	People are wrong to be dismissive of the potential for violence at an independent school. Just because we are small, we are still vulnerable.	
	At a minimum, access and entry should be looked at for an accreditation requirement.	
School 6	Just went through an SAIS accreditation and there seems to be more questions about safety and security.	
	Campuses for SCISA schools are so different and their needs for safety and security are different.	
	Supportive of an audit being required for accreditation, and it is important to work with local law enforcement	
School 7	A requirement would be beneficial.	

	Suggested a points system as a way to articulate a pyramid of decision-making since SCISA has such different schools and there might be different options for points within each category.	
	Some way to self-evaluate would be appropriate. An example would be an audit within the last 3 years.	
School 8	This school brought in outside counsel to conduct the audit.	
School 9	There was an explicit acknowledgment that there is a wide range of member schools within the association--different ages, missions, specialties, campuses, etc.	I had to stop and think about that. Automatic answer is YES. On the other hand, I would probably want to know from SCISA what is feasible for all member schools.
	There should be some set of standards, but it is very important that they apply to all members and make sense for their unique situations. SCISA must be consistent with the requirement for all types of schools.	Are there any exceptions to the rule before we implement it?
	It is not about being "fair", but it is about being "equitable."	
School 10	Supports requirement for accreditation	Personally, I would like to see that. There are basic minimums that don't cost a lot
	A set of standards would be helpful because there are often events that take place at other member schools and it would be beneficial to know that all sites adhere to safety and security criteria (referenced athletic events)	
School 11	There should be a requirement, especially for large events.	
	There would have to be a broad enough option for all schools to abide by.	
	This head was on a dual accreditation visit for the Southern Association of Independent Schools (SCISA) and the independent school association in Florida. There was no requirement for SAIS, but there was an explicit standard for the Florida accreditation.	

School 12	Strong support for a requirement. This head pointed out that a violent act such as an active shooter could demolish the financial health and a school's existence. The ramifications of how you prepare for and respond to an event are significant. Therefore, there needs to be a requirement.	Absolutely. I am a big fan of accreditation and it would be an injustice not to have it on there.
	This school Head pointed out that there are two components that should be considered for the requirement. The first has to do with in-person lockdowns and preparation. The second is when there is greater exposure such as outdoor activities and athletic events. This Head wants to know that the school they are visiting has the same requirements that they do.	
	They understand that not every school has an SRO, but there needs to be some form of allocation of funds and accountability.	I do like being able to totally lockdown the whole school
	There needs to be a relationship with local law enforcement	Relationships are critical. Everyone on the same page.
School 13	Not really. This Head noted that there are already so many requirements from agencies such as DSS and DHEC and that our society is extremely litigious in nature.	It is implicit within the way society lives. If we weren't dealing with litigious parents...
	The nature of SCISA schools are all so different that an additional requirement for all does not seem to make sense.	Every school is so different. What's appropriate for one [may not be appropriate for another].
School 14	Supportive of a requirement but emphasized that it cannot be a one-size-fits-all model	I think personally holistically that would be good.
	Believes it is reasonable for schools to conduct a survey or audit	
	It is not attainable to have an SRO or security person full-time for schools that have similar financial constraints.	
School 15	There should be a requirement.	Absolutely, there should be a requirement.

	No relationship with local law enforcement. Example given about police investigating child abuse claim and the last time they were on campus was said to have been approximately 5 years ago.	
Interview Question 7		
School 1	Example provided of the Barracuda safety devices for doors. A parent brought it to their attention and they had immediate interest in it. They started an initiative where they got different sponsors for every room.	
	New initiatives that are smaller and more immediate tend to be the most successful	
	Tangible and visible	They can see their part
School 2	Keeping new initiatives simple is beneficial	
	Faculty-buy in is incredibly important	
	Basic principles. Reminding people about fundamental principles	
	Preparation helps initiatives be successful	
	Clear and open communication helps stakeholders with buy-in	
School 3	Personnel issues and politics--finding key influencers within the population.	Who will have a problem with it? Cherry pick the people. Start with the influencers.
	Faculty buy-in	
	Communication is critical. People want to know why certain actions or decisions are being made. They want to know how it affects them personally and why it should matter to them (educational component as well).	
School 4	Keeping the faculty and students at the forefront of every decision	
	Faculty buy-in	They're going to talk amongst themselves
	Continuous oversight and review	Once you implement it, you have to keep going back and reviewing it. The responsibility falls directly on the administration.
	Philanthropic support	

	Clear communication and education from school leadership to the stakeholders	
School 5	Identifying the key influencers within the community	A lot of it falls to dynamics
	Provided example of failed implementation that was "bottom-up" and led by students	
	Dependent on who the faculty and staff are who are seen in support, as well as in opposition. --Organizational politics are more of an issue than parent politics	
School 6	The role of leadership serving as both a mouthpiece for the change as well as personal action. Accountability on the part of the leader.	It needs my full involvement and participation, modeling and consistency.
	Example of ID badges-simple identification badge to determine whether or not a person should be there. Important for this School Head to wear her badge at all times, and even keeps a backup so there is no excuse for others.	It starts with me
	Communicating the importance of safety and security, and even folding it into the admission process. Determining whether an applicant is a risk, given this school's focus on mental health issues.	I don't mince my words. Be honest. It would be an issue all the time if they don't respect the safety and security measures.
School 7	Buy-in from a wider range of people.	Obviously, the size of school, the more you need to have involved. Force of will by leader.
	Communicating in a way so that people understand the program or initiative affects them directly.	It's a shooter for everybody--that mentality has to be pervasive throughout the institution
	Constantly reminding people and communicating, especially since new people enter the organization each year. An example of a new teacher was provided. They forgot their basic training not to allow anyone into their rooms during a lockdown; however, a student knocked on the door and the new teacher let them in.	
School 8	Faculty and parents knowing everybody	

	Honest approach to communication. Sharing information, and telling the community that the parent survey cited safety as the #3 reason they send their children to this school.	
	Importance of mission	Go back to the mission of the organization---it clarifies and unites people around new initiatives.
	Faculty buy-in	You need faculty involved to survive
School 9	Implementing new programs or initiatives must be in line with the mission of the school.	
	Administrative support is a critical component to the success or failure of implementation	Our job is to lay the groundwork before. I want to know if it's going to fly before I send it out. it's an ingredient but it's not the only thing.
	The Head of School must be fully committed to implementing the change. Vetting the program or initiative through subgroups can bolster leadership's confidence. Provided example of uniforms. The Head was resistant to change for over 30 years and blocked efforts to implement them. Finally, there was enough support to make him change his mind.	Determine the vision first
	Trustee buy-in is very important for the successful implementation of any safety and security measure because it's such a sensitive topic.	Tell me again the vision for the school. I need to know you're in my corner.
School 10	Open communication is very important. If you do not communicate properly, the community will be hesitant and there will be backlash as a result.	We don't want to be surprising anybody. We've introduced things where we didn't communicate upfront.
	Buy-in from all parties. Faculty were mentioned first, and then there was consideration for additional members of the community.	
	Setting clear goals and then communicating the results.	

School 11	Due diligence and research prior to implementation is important. This head recommends learning from peer schools to determine what practices work well and what are unsuccessful. Example: Within their Strategic Plan they created research teams that were directed to look at other schools and collect examples.	We've had good success looking at the success others have had and not reinvent the wheel.
	There have been pilot programs that were initiated by a subgroup of faculty. It was important to make adjustments over time and embrace a spirit of continuous improvement.	
	The Head is involved in strategic level initiatives, but not logistical in nature. There have been instances where the Head personally identified a problem and initiated a change. They communicated that problem to the community and provided a rationale why it had to be addressed. There was an opportunity to find new buy-in.	I try not to micro-manage.
	A program has a higher probability of success when it is measurable. Prototypes, feedback loops.	
	An example of a failed program was provided where too many parents acted outside the boundaries of the system that was in place. Eventually, the Head had to dissolve the program and recreate it in a different format that prevented outside influence and kept tighter control over operations.	
School 12	1. Mission--The program or initiative must be in line with the mission of the school	
	2. Buy-in--From faculty, families and students (in that order)	
	3. Resources	
	The Head of School feels that she is the face of the program, is very hands-on, and needs to be specific about expectations.	There must be a level of clarity with communicating measurable goals as well as explaining "why" the school is doing what they are doing.
	Accountability was mentioned several times.	
School 13	Top-down leadership has not been effective in this Head's experience.	

	<p>An example was provided with an academic program that the Head was extremely familiar with, felt was appropriate for the school, and had sufficient financial backing. The Head then allowed the faculty to vote on whether or not to embrace the new change. They felt that was a major mistake because the consequences were damaging in terms of the inevitable divisiveness. The Head ultimately recognized the failure and had to take the lead to apologize.</p>	
	<p>Initiatives and programs that evolve from the faculty have proven to be the most successful.</p>	
	<p>Leadership's role is to build trust among the faculty. The leader must be authentic with their own personal style. They must also communicate and educate their constituents honestly. An example was given when faculty were told at a meeting in January that they could expect raises for the coming school year. Unfortunately, due to the virus, those raises were no longer viable options. The Head had to acknowledge that what she said was true at the time, but had to educate the faculty as to their financial position and the need to adjust those initial plans.</p>	
School 14	<p>There needs to be a point-person for any new initiative.</p>	
	<p>Data drives decisions on new initiatives or programs. There needs to be at least 3 years of data.</p>	<p>Data drives the process. Not whimsical programs. There's always the independent thinkers, but can you afford it? Will your constituency base be willing to sacrifice for it?</p>
School 15	<p>Gaining the trust of the faculty and students is important.</p>	<p>It all comes down to relationships. You can't BS kids. With kids, I don't have to work very hard. They know I have a kind heart and I will keep them safe.</p>
	<p>When implementing change with parents it is important to communicate the rationale.</p>	<p>When you do something, you explain it.</p>

	With faculty, you gain their trust by including them in the decision-making process.	
	Implementation takes time and cannot happen instantly.	
Additional Observations or Quotes		
School 1	They do not have the funding for technology support that they wish they had. However, they said "it is a bit of a domino" because even if they had the technology they would then need someone to oversee and manage it, which they also don't have. So even if they could devote resources to technology, there is still manpower involved.	
School 2	Recently installed panic system to lock down the entire campus. Each new initiative, however, brings with it some downside. Training, accidents, etc.	
	Each school believes it has unique features. This one is within a resort community that has one portion gated, yet is accessible through another thoroughfare.	
School 3	Lower School tends to be more secure than the older students and their portion of campus	
School 4	N.A.	
School 5	Fundraising: "There are some folks who think that it's a good thing to be fundraising for. Others ask 'why do we have to pay extra for safety and security?'" There is greater success for fundraising when there is a new initiative rather than improving upon current systems and features.	
School 6	Example of difference between public school background vs. private school transition. Coming from a large public high school where there was much activity and sheer volume of students in the hallways in between classes, she said she didn't know everyone. Then, when she went to an independent school you are able to know the students and really be able to watch them and identify their moods and emotions in the hallways.	
	This school head believes potential acts of violence are focused on maximizing damage and number of lives.	

School 7	The Sheriff's Department recommended not to have concealed carry on campus. "How do we know the good guys from the bad guys?"	
	The importance of being able to lock down quickly. There was a shooting at a local public school and this Head says their school was "locked down before the 3rd or 4th police car was on site."	
	It is easier for bigger schools to have law enforcement at athletic contests.	
School 8	Mentioned the difference between appropriate drilling vs. scaring the kids. More emphasis placed on likelier scenarios like fire drills and lightning protocol.	
School 9	There is a real commitment to mission and vision from this school head, which drives all of his decision-making. "My job is temporary. Fulfill the school's mission and leave it better for the next person."	
School 10	N.A.	
School 11	They provided an example of community members acclimating to change. At one point students were strongly in disagreement with the installation of a gated entrance and chose to write an article in the student newspaper. Over time, they have come to accept the change and even state, "Now it feels more intimate."	
School 12	N.A.	
School 13	N.A.	
School 14	N.A.	
School 15	N.A.	